

WOMEN, EMPLOYMENT AND
TRADE UNIONS

A thesis
submitted in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the Degree
of
Master of Arts in Political Science
by
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University of Canterbury
1983

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my supervisor, Rob Steven, for all his guidance and assistance. Thanks also to Rosemary Novitz and Del Small for their involvement in this thesis.

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ABSTRACT

This thesis discusses the position of women in paid employment and trade unions in New Zealand within the context of the theory of classes in modern capitalist societies, and the feminist theory on the family. Thus showing that the sexual division of the work-force not only divides the type of occupations in which men and women are engaged, but restricts women to working class positions within the production process, and that the class structure in the paid work-force is resultant of the sexual division of labour in the family in which the work of child-rearing is assigned to women.

The discussion on women in trade unions focuses on the study by Greare, Herd and Howells, which is widely regarded as one of the most thorough analysis of women in New Zealand trade unions. In discussing this study in the context of the arguments of class divisions and the family the inadequacies of this study become apparent, as does the importance of the theory of class and gender and the family to understanding the position of women in employment and trade unions.

INTRODUCTION

The New Zealand work-force, like the work-forces in most advanced capitalist societies, is divided according to gender. Men and women are employed in separate occupations, and the range of occupations which employ large numbers of women is more restricted than those that employ men. Women are primarily employed as nurses, teachers, clerical workers, clothing workers, cooks, cleaners and in serving jobs in restaurants and hotels. These occupations are often low paid, labour intensive and associated with the type of work women under-take in the home.

This thesis focuses on the division in the labour-force and using the theory of classes in advanced capitalist societies shows how this is also a division of class. Men and women occupy different class positions within the production process. Women are generally engaged in working class occupations, and the majority of supervisory, managerial and professional positions are held by men. Even in those occupations which employ predominantly women, it is often men who hold the supervisory positions.

The gender-class division has not developed accidentally, but is an intrinsic part of the structure of society, and the subordinate position which women occupy. Feminist theory on the family and the work-force shows how this subordinate position results primarily from

female child-rearing in the family. The assignment of child-care to women places women in a disadvantageous position within the paid work-force. It causes women to leave the work-force or under-take part-time employment to accommodate the work of child-rearing, thus, women are often unable to acquire class mobility because of their extended absence from paid labour. Men, on the other hand, do not usually have to cope with child-rearing, and are therefore more able to gain class mobility, and move into higher paid, less arduous positions.

The discussion of women in trade unions focuses on the study on this subject by Greare, Herd and Howells. This study is widely regarded as the most thorough analysis of women in trade union in New Zealand, however, when this study is analysed in the context of the arguments of the class-gender division it can be seen that there are many inadequacies and inaccuracies in its conclusions and interpretations. The failure to consider in any depth the class positions of men and women in the work-force or the causes for their respective positions results in a failure to fully comprehend either women in employment or trade unions.

CHAPTER ONE

CLASS AND GENDER

Introduction

Within the paid labour-force a sharp division exists between the type of work in which men and women are engaged. While men are employed in a vast range of occupations, women are concentrated in a limited number of jobs. Women are primarily nurses, teachers, clothing workers, shop assistants, clerical workers and hotel and restaurant workers. Furthermore, within these occupations, the supervisory positions are generally held by men.

There is a predominance of men in the professional and managerial occupations and many men are employed in jobs which require specialised skills. Thus, most men receive higher wages than the majority of employed women, have better working conditions and are in receipt of more advantages as a result of their position in the work-force.

Many women are also employed in occupations which require certain skills, such as typists, dressmakers and cooks. However, as these skills are possessed by a large number of women, women workers are in a less effective bargaining position than men. Therefore, they cannot place the same demands for higher wages and better working conditions on their employers.

The reasons why the work-force is segregated according to gender and why women are restricted to the lower echelons of the

employment market can be understood by analysing two social structures. The class structure in advanced capitalist societies and the structure of the family.

The division between the type of work in which men and women are employed is a division of class. While men occupy all the class positions in the production process, women are predominantly employed in working class jobs. They are further restricted within the working class occupations to a limited range of jobs, many of which closely resemble the type of work women perform in the home, for example, jobs which entail cooking or cleaning, and work such as nursing and teaching which involves caring for others, work which many women undertake within the family.

Women's subordinate position is established in the family and extended from there to the workforce. Men are in a position of privilege and authority within the family primarily because it is women who perform the work of child-care.

While there is nothing inherent to child-rearing which causes women's subordination, the privatised and unpaid nature of this work in capitalist societies causes women to be financially dependent on their husbands' income. This economic dependence gives men power over women, even if they choose not to overtly exercise this power.

Male privilege is reinforced in the paid work-force where men receive higher wages than women, have a wider range of occupational choices and hold almost all the positions of authority. The divisions in the work-force contributes to limiting women's options to motherhood and creating the appearance of male superiority.

The focus of this chapter will be to analyse the form and causes

of women's subordination in the work-force. To analyse the form of women's work-force position it will first be necessary to discuss the class divisions within the capitalist production process, then to discuss the class location of employed women. The causes of women's inferior class position can only be shown through analysing the family, as it is here that male authority, the cause of women's subordination, is established.

CLASS DIVISIONS

When defining classes within the capitalist production process, a distinction must be made between agents and functions.¹ The function is the position in the production process, the relationship to the means of production. This is different from the job, which merely defines the technical nature of the work performed, not the relationship to the means of production. It is possible for a job to entail more than one function. The agent is the individual who performs the function. This distinction has to be made as it is possible, with class mobility, for an agent to perform different functions at different times during his working life. Or for an individual's employment to entail performing more than one function,

1 G. Carchedi, "On the Economic Identification of the New Middle Class," Economy and Society (Feb. 1975).

Nicos Poulantzas, Classes in Contemporary Capitalism, trans. David Fernbach (London: New Left Books, 1975).

either at the same or at different times.

Due to the complex nature of the class structure in the capitalist production process, a precise definition of the class positions is essential if the class-gender division is to be understood. The capitalist system allows for a limited amount of class mobility, however, this mobility is often restrictive. Individuals with certain social characteristics, such as their race or sex, often have less access to class mobility than other groups. Hence, men can become capitalists functionaries partly because women continue to perform the function of workers.

The purpose of the capitalist production process is the production and appropriation of surplus-value. In its most general form this involves three elements; the capitalist, the means of production and the worker. The capitalist owns the means of production and the workers, being non-owners, must sell their labour to the capitalists in exchange for wages. When the workers sell their labour, they sell their ability to produce commodities. The capitalists do not pay the workers a wage equivalent to all they produce, but for their labour-power, the price of which is historically determined by the class struggle. The value of labour-power is always less than the value of the commodities the workers produce. Those commodities which the workers produce in excess of the value of their labour-power provides surplus -value, which the capitalists realise as profits, when the commodities are sold.¹

Hence, as Carchedi puts it, the division between the working

¹ Karl Marx, Capital (Great Britain: Everyman's Library, 1974).

class and the capitalist class is between "the producer/non-producer, the exploited/exploiter, the labourer/non-labourer and the owner/non-owner."¹

However, within the modern capitalist production process class divisions are somewhat more complex than suggested in this general discription. The need to create an ever increasing mass of surplus-value has resulted in a technically divided production process. The individual worker no longer produces complete commodities, as was common in the early days of capitalism. Deskilling, a process by which the different functions involved in making a commodity are reduced to their simplist form and divided between several workers, has resulted in each commodity being produced by numerous workers, this Carchedi terms the function of the collective worker. Deskilling has the effect of reducing working class resistance, as it removes the need for workers to acquire specialised skills, thus making individual workers more easily replaceable.

Within the capitalist class, the emergence of the joint stock company has resulted in a separation between the legal, judicial ownership, held by the share-holders, and the real, economic ownership, held by the top managers, who make the major decisions concerning production.² Although in some companies the

1 Carchedi, p. 13.

2 Poulantzas.

Carchedi.

Louis Althusser, For Marx, trans. Ben Brewster (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1976).

top managers are also share-holders, this is a different situation from the one that existed prior to the emergence of the joint stock company, when ownership was often held entirely by an individual capitalist.

Like the functions of the workers, the functions of capital have been divided into separate processes. Carchedi defines the fundamental function of capital as that of supervision, which he sees as having two aspects, control and surveillance, and co-ordination and unity.

Control and surveillance entails maintaining the economic exploitation of the workers by ensuring they produce the largest possible surplus-value. Co-ordination and unity of the production process is defined by Carchedi as productive labour as, unlike control and surveillance, it contributes to the production of surplus-value.

The separation of these two functions has resulted, Carchedi argues, in the proletarianisation of those agents involved only in the task of co-ordination and unity. This task is no longer defined as part of the function of capital, but as a function of the collective worker.

Poulantzas has a more limited definition of the functions of collective workers than Carchedi. He argues that only manual, productive, non-supervisory labour can be included, thus excluding technical, supervisory, non-productive and 'mental' or 'white-collar' labour.

The exclusion of labour performed in the non-productive sectors is according to an economic criterion. Poulantzas argues that agents

performing labour in this sector are, like all of capitals functionaries, paid out of the surplus-value produced in the productive sectors, therefore, they contribute to the exploitation of productive workers.

However, as Carchedi argues, labour performed in non-productive sectors, rather than adding to the exploitation of productive workers, reduces the costs for capitalists and allows them to expropriate more surplus-value in the productive sector. Thus, indirectly, non-productive workers contribute to the production of surplus-value.

Furthermore, Carchedi argues that non-productive labourers are subject to subordination to the labour process as, like productive workers, they perform unpaid labour. That is, they do not receive a wage which equivalent to the costs they save for the capitalist. They are paid for only a portion of the time they labour, thus, Carchedi argues, they are oppressed by the capitalist production process.

Poulantzas excludes supervisory labour as, he argues, it perpetuates the political dominance of capital over the working class. He states that:

The work of management and supervision under capitalism is the direct reproduction within the process of production itself of the political relations between the capitalist and the working class.¹

¹ Poulantzas, pp. 227-228.

Poulantzas excludes supervisory labour despite acknowledging that this labour can also be subject to the domination of capital. Nor does he make any distinction within supervisory labour, between supervisors, such as foreman, who have little or no control over the production process, who merely carry out the orders of their own supervisors, and those supervisors, such as top managers, who have a great deal of control over the production process.

Technical and 'mental' labour is, according to Poulantzas, the direct carrier of the ideological domination of capital over labour. Technical labour is excluded from the function of workers as, Poulantzas argues, it holds what he terms 'secret knowledge'. He sees this secret knowledge as necessary to the reproduction of capitalist social relations as it legitimizes the subordination of labour to capital, giving the appearance that workers are incapable of organising the production process themselves.

'Mental' labour is excluded as it is seen as participating, if only in a minor way, promoting the elevated status of 'mental' labour over manual labour, thus promoting the ideological domination of the workers.

The exclusion of 'mental' labour from the definition of the working class seems somewhat inappropriate when applied to low level clerks, typists and stenographers. Agents performing these jobs have very little, or no control over their own pace of production and no control over the labour of others. Thus, they are just as subordinate to the capitalist production as manual workers.

Although the functions within the production process are separate, it is possible for an agent to perform more than one

function. For example:

An engineer in a steel works...who is head of an office and who, therefore, is responsible for the technicians working under him (i.e. for their productivity) performs both the global function of capital, because he oversees the despotic organization of the labour-process, and the function of the collective worker, because as an engineer, he takes part in that labour process.¹

Agents who perform both functions are defined by Carchedi as members of the "new middle class", Wright defines the same group as members of a "contradictory class location."² Both Carchedi and Wright see this class as taking characteristics from both the working and the capitalist class, and including a wide range of agents. As Carchedi states:

... the work of supervision and management under the monopoly capitalist mode of production is made up of a hierarchy of positions at the top of which the function of the collective worker is either non-existent

¹ Carchedi, p. 32.

² Erik Olin Wright, "Class Boundaries in Advanced Capitalist Societies," New Left Review, No. 98 (July-August 1976).

or is of minimal importance, and at the bottom the function of collective worker is predominant and the global function of capital is almost non-existent; through a gradation of positions which are the outcome of different combinations of the two functions.¹

The source and level of an agent's income is dependent on which function predominates. Carchedi defines the income of those agents performing the function of capital as revenue as it is "the income of those who neither are exploited nor oppressed, but maintain (or help to maintain) the system of economic exploitation and oppression."²

The income of agents performing the function of collective workers, wages, is payment for labour-power. An income received from revenue will invariably be higher than one received from wages. This income differential can be explained, as Crompton and Gubbay point out, "at least in part by the need to preserve and maintain a structure of authority, and ensure that it continues on behalf of capital."³

So what are the implications of the class divisions for women? It is clear that most women in paid employment perform the function of collective workers, but so do many men. What distinguishes

1 Carchedi, pp. 32-33.

2 Carchedi, p. 55.

3 Rosemary Crompton and John Gubbay, Economy and Class Structure (London:Macmillan, 1977), p. 155.

the experience of women from men, is that women are concentrated almost entirely in the working class, while a substantial proportion of men perform the function of capital, either exclusively or as well as the function of workers.

Hence, men are more likely than women to acquire class mobility, and, within the production process, almost all the positions of authority are held by men. The pace of production is controlled mainly by men, while women have virtually no control, even over the pace of their own production, and women receive lower incomes than men

Part of the explanation of women's restriction to performing exclusively the function of workers can be derived from the theory of the reserve army of labour. Veronica Beechey¹ has presented a comprehensive account of how women act as a reserve army of labour, and it is worth discussing her arguments in some detail. However it is first necessary to briefly present Marx's theory of the industrial reserve army of labour.

Reserve Army Theory

Marx¹ defined the industrial reserve army as a surplus population, which exists independently of the actual increases in

¹ Veronica Beechey, "Some Notes on Female Wage Labour in Capitalist Production," Capital and Class, No. 3 (Autumn 1977).

² Karl Marx, pp. 708-712.

the population, and can move in to branches of production when the market for its products expands, or into newly created branches of production, without interrupting the work in other spheres.

He classified the reserve army into three main categories; the floating, the latent and the stagnant. The floating reserve army exists in centres of modern industry, such as factories, workshops and mines. Members of the floating reserve army are sometimes repelled and sometimes attracted in large numbers according to the needs of production.

The latent form, Marx likened to the rural population, which is continually on the move to join the urban proletariat. This persistent flow toward the town, presupposes, Marx states, that there is always a latent population in the rural districts, therefore agricultural labourers wages must be at a level which is close to pauperism.

The third category, the stagnant form, consists of persons whose employment is extremely irregular, who offer capital an almost inexhaustible reserve of available labour.

As well as providing a surplus of labour to be utilized in times of expansion, the reserve army of labour serves to divide the working class and to keep wages low, through presenting a threat to workers jobs.

Women as a Reserve Army of Labour

Beechey argues that women, particularly married women, are a preferable source of latent reserve army of labour, and draws a parallel between married women workers and semi-proletarianised

workers on the periphery of the capitalist economy. Like semi-proletarianised workers, married women workers comprise a section of the labour-force which is not entirely dependent on its own wage to meet the costs of production and reproduction of its labour-power. Part of this cost, for semi-proletarianised workers, is met by their family, still involved in subsistence agriculture outside the sphere of capitalism, and for married women workers, it is met by their husbands, or in the case of single women, by their parents.

Furthermore, when unemployed both groups of workers do not usually become dependent on the state, as do other groups of workers. Married women can virtually 'disappear' back in to the family, without even appearing on the unemployment statistics, and become entirely dependent, financially, on their husbands. Semi-proletarianised workers can return to their families, outside the sphere of capitalist production.

Beechey goes on to argue that women are more preferable as a source of latent reserve army than semi-proletarianised workers, as, when married women are in paid employment, the family becomes entirely dependent on the wage and the commodities which it can purchase, thus, expanding the market for goods produced in the capitalist production process. Whereas the families of semi-proletarianised workers continue to produce commodities for their own consumption, separate from capitalist production.

However, the reserve army theory cannot be applied directly to women workers, as they do not conform entirely to all its requirements. The restriction of women to a limited range of occupations within the working class means in times of recession

they cannot all be expelled from the work-force. As Michelle Barrett points out; "if all typists and cleaners are women (which is virtual all the case) it is implausible to suggest that they can all be dispensed with."¹

Similarly in times of expansion, it is unlikely that women will move in to areas of production in large numbers which predominantly hire men. Expansion in these spheres usually results in the employment of youths rather than married women.

In times of expansion, when not enough males can be found to fill all the vacancies, women may be employed in small numbers, but this is not common. Women have moved into jobs that are usually performed by men during times of war, but this is an unusual circumstance, and not directly the result of expansion in production.

Roberta Hill² has pointed out that women workers do perform the function of a latent, stagnant and floating reserve army, but only within those occupations which employ large numbers of women.

Within the limited range of occupations which employ women,

¹ Michelle Barrett, Women's Oppression Today: Problems in Marxist Feminist Analysis (London: Verso, 1980), p. 161.

² Roberta M. Hill, Women, Capitalist Crisis and the Reserve Army of Labour, M.A. thesis (Canterbury University, 1979).

it is possible for women to be used as a reserve army as large numbers of women possess the necessary skills for these occupations. Many girls take clerical courses at school and sewing is often learnt either in the home or at school. Thus, there is a large reserve of potential clothing and clerical workers. Furthermore, many of the occupations which employ women are similar to the type of work women perform in the home; cooking, cleaning and so on, hence, many women are capable of performing this work in paid employment.

The alternative source of financial support which married women have means, not only can women be paid below the value of their labour-power, but also, in times of recession, employers will experience less resistance when expelling women workers than males, from the labour-force.

While it can be argued that women perform the function of a reserve army of labour, the reserve army theory itself cannot be used to explain women's presence. As Hartmann points out:

Just as capital creates the places indifferent to the individuals who fill them, the categories of marxist analysis, 'class', 'reserve army of labour', 'wage-labourer', do not explain why particular people fill particular places.¹

¹ Heidi I. Hartmann, "The Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism: Toward a More Progressive Union," Capital and Class, No. 8 (Summer 1979), pp. 7-8.

Marx explained that the capitalist system requires a reserve army of labour, but within the theory itself there is no definition of the type of workers who perform its function. Although it is feasible that workers of a certain race, sex or with some other distinguishing social characteristic, will be found in the reserve army, their presence is the result of other social force.

Beechey related women's position in the reserve army to women's dependent position in the family. She stated that women can be paid below the value of their labourpower because part of the cost of its production and reproduction can be met by their husbands. However as Anthias points out:

...women's dependence on the male wage...may be a result of their position rather than structuring it - for they are economically dependent when their wages are low and not otherwise.¹

When women are paid below the value of their labour-power, they become economically dependent on men. This does not explain why women, rather than men, are in the dependent position. To be able to use women as a reserve army, capital presupposes an alternative source of support for woman within the family. Therefore, to understand women's position in the labour-force and their use as a reserve army, it is necessary to analyse the structure of the family.

1 Floya Anthias, "Women and the Reserve Army of Labour: A Critique of Veronica Beechey," Capital and Class, No. 10 (Spring 1980), p. 56.

The Structure of the Family and Female Child-Rearing

Eisenstein points out that the family is:

... a series of relationships which define woman's activities both external and internal to it. Because the family is a structure of relationships which connect individuals to the economy, the family is a social, economic, political and cultural unit of society. It is historical in its formation, not a simple biological unit.

Like women's role, the family is not natural.¹

The family is defined as the site of women's subordination, as it is here that the 'sex-gender' system is produced and reproduced. By the sex-gender system Eisenstein means women's biological assignment to bear children, becomes their political assignment to rear them.² The political assignment of women as child-rearers being central to their subordinate position in the family, and men's authority. Within the family, female child-rearing is reproduced as "Women as bearers and rearers of children, rear

1 Zillah Eisenstein, "Developing a Theory fo Capitalist Patriarch and Socialist Feminism," in Capitalist Patriarchy and the Case for Socialist Feminism, ed. Zillah Eisenstein (New York:Monthly Review Press, 1979), p. 48.

2 Zillah Eisenstein, "The State, the Patriarchal Family and Working Mothers," Kapitalistate, No. 8 (1980).

their female children to bear more children." ¹

Within the capitalist economy female child-rearing causes women to become economically dependent on men. When women leave the workforce to care for children, or undertake part-time work which will fit in with the demands of child-care, they have to rely on another source of income other than their wage, this source invariably is their husband's income. When the mother is unmarried, the state provides an income, but it only acts as a substitute husband, and will cease supporting the women if she marries.

When all the commodities necessary for subsistence have to be purchased with the wage, women's dependence on the man's wage places them in a position of subordination. Even if the women does not perceive her position as one of subordination, to her husband, his control over the family's income puts him in a position of authority.

Not all women are mothers, and due to the smaller size of families, the length of time women devote to child-rearing is comparatively short, yet the role of child-care still structures most women's lives. When women are denied training or promotion by employers because it is assumed they will eventually leave paid work to care for children, or when it is argued that mothers do not have the same commitment to their paid work as men, the

¹ Eisenstein, Kapitalistate, p. 48.

influence of the motherhood role on all women is demonstrated.

Men's authority established in the home, is reinforced in the realm of paid employment, where almost all the supervisory positions are held by men and many of the unskilled, non-supervisory and labour-intensive positions are held by women. Furthermore, within the paid workforce women's role as domestic labourers is reinforced.

As Hartmann points out:

The sexual division of labor reappears in the labor market, where women work at women's jobs, often the very jobs they used to do only in the home - food preparation and service, cleaning of all kinds, caring for others and so on. As these jobs are low-status and low paying patriarchal relations remain intact, though their material base shifts somewhat from the family to the wage differential ... we are moving from 'family based' to 'industrially based' patriarchy within capitalism.¹

However, this shift of 'industrially based' patriarchy cannot replace the family as the primary site of male authority. It is within the family that women's political role as child-rearers is assigned, and male authority in the workforce merely reflects and reinforces their authority in the family.

Eisenstein argues that the restriction of women to low paying occupations is the result of an accommodation between the needs of capital and male authority. Capital acquires cheap labour, but

¹ Hartmann, Capital and Class, p. 19.

the dominance of men in the family is assured through their greater earning ability. Furthermore, as men and women occupy different class locations, and women are limited to employment in the so called women's jobs, women workers do not present a threat of cheap labour to men's jobs.

Eisenstein goes on to argue that when women are in paid employment their work as mothers still takes precedence. She states:

The ideological shift which has taken place since the 50's is mainly a move from 'women's place is in the home' to the notion of women as 'secondary earners' or 'working mothers'.¹

Thus, she states,

The sexual hierarchy which is used within the labour force is maintained through the primacy of women as mothers first. Sexual ghettoization of the labour force maintains this definition of woman as mother in that it places her in a secondary position within the labour force which reinforces her primary position within the home. If woman has few options as to job choice in the world of paid work and her wages are low ... her dependence upon a man has not fundamentally changed.²

¹ Eisenstein, Kapitalistate, p. 55.

² Eisenstein, Kapitalistate, p. 56.

Conclusion

The majority of women in the paid labour-force are engaged in occupations in which they perform the function of workers. This position in the production process means that many women workers receive low incomes, are subject to bad working conditions, have minimal job security and very little control over the pace of their own production.

The disadvantages of women's class position are compounded by their restriction to a limited range of jobs. Within the occupations which employ large numbers of women workers, women provide an almost endless reserve of labour, Married women can be drawn into the work force in times of expansion and repelled in times of recession with comparative ease. Thus, women can be used as a floating, stagnant and latent reserve army of labour within these occupations. As women perform the function of a reserve army of labour, the wage levels of women workers are further depressed and women's ability to organize in opposition to the actions of their employees actions, such as redundancies, is reduced.

Women's class position and their use as a reserve army of labour results primarily from their work in child-rearing. Women's broken work pattern, and the part-time and seasonal participation of many married women contribute to women's position in the class structure and are directly attributable to their work in child-rearing.

As men are free from the work of child-care they are more able to acquire work related skills and gain class mobility within the production process. The class division which places women in

an inferior position to men, in turn reinforces men's authority within the family. When almost all the supervisory, managerial and supervisory positions are held by men, and most women are employed in semi or unskilled jobs, male superiority and authority appears natural. Furthermore, the low wages which women receive means that invariably they will receive a lower income than their husbands, thus the financial dominance of men is maintained.

Female child-rearing is an intrinsic part of the structure of the paid work-force. It is directly responsible for the gender-class division which places men in a dominant position in the production process and the restriction of women to a limited range of occupations. Thus, to understand any facet of woman's employment it is essential to consider the effects of female child-rearing and the class-gender division.

In the following chapter, women worker's involvement in trade unions will be discussed in the context of the class-gender division and the effects of female child-rearing.

CHAPTER TWO

WOMEN IN TRADE UNIONS

Introduction

This chapter focuses on the study on women in trade unions by Greare, Herd and Howells.¹ As this work is widely regarded as one of the main sources of information and analysis on women in trade unions in New Zealand, a detailed critique and assessment of its findings is necessary. The critique and assessment presented in this chapter will be in the context of the arguments on women's position in paid employment raised in the previous chapter.

Three main areas are to be discussed: the research methods and techniques, the focus and approach of the study and the interpretation of the data.

In analysing the study in the context of the arguments raised in the first chapter of this thesis, it can be seen that many of the interpretations of the authors are at best superficial and, at worst, completely inaccurate. While the position of women in paid employment and the family is touched upon in the study,

1 A.J. Greare, J.J. Herd, AND J.M. Howells, Women in Trade Unions: A Case Study of Participation in New Zealand (Victoria University Wellington:Industrial Relations Centre, 1979), Industrial Relations Research Monograph No. 6.

no in-depth consideration is given to women's subordination in either spheres. Consequently the study cannot adequately explain the position of women within the trade union movement.

Before a critique of the authors arguments and interpretations of the position of women in trade unions can be made, it is first necessary to assess the research methods used in the study.

Research Methods and Techniques

The researchers did three surveys on people in the trade union movement. Union secretaries, male and female union members and women union officials. The questionnaires used in the three surveys are included at the end of this chapter.

Postal questionnaires were sent to the secretaries of those unions which had a total membership of over 100, of whom 30% or over were female. There were 90 unions that met this criterion. Forty nine secretaries replied, of whom 46 were male. This was a response rate of 54% which, although reasonably high for a postal survey, inevitable contains some bias, as Wiesberg and Bowen point out; "the people who return the questionnaires probably have views significantly different from those who throw them away."¹

The questionnaire sent to union secretaries had several inadequacies to which attention must be drawn. Firstly, the structure of the questions on attendance levels at annual general

¹ Herbert F. Weisberg and Bruce D Bowen, An Introduction to Survey Results and Data Analysis (San Francisco:W.H. Freeman and Company, 1977), p. 59.

and branch meetings and willingness to run for union office by male and female members could easily lead to ambiguous results. These questions were closed-ended and three alternative answers were provided: high, medium or low. No set criterion was provided upon which the secretaries could judge participation rates in their unions. Therefore, the conclusions which the authors draw from their answers are based entirely on the subjective viewpoints of the secretaries. Distorted results could arise as, for example, what may be considered a low participation rate by one secretary may be considered medium or high by another.

This potential for distortion is compounded, as the authors made comparisons between male and female participation rates, based entirely on the results of these questions. The secretaries were not asked to make comparisons themselves, nor were they given any indication that the researchers were intending to make comparisons. Thus, a secretary may have responded that participation rates were low for both male and female members, but may have considered the participation rate for females to be much lower. However, because of the structure of the questions, the authors would have concluded from this secretary's response, that participation rates for males and females in this union were equal.

An alternative approach for finding the participation rates of male and female union members would have been to ask the secretaries what percentage of the men and women in their union attend annual general meeting and stand for election in union positions. This would have given a more objective response and allowed for more precise comparisons.

One question which showed some element of bias in its phrase-

ology was "Do you think women take as much interest in union affairs as men?" The responses definitely yes, probably yes, not sure, probably no and definitely no were provided. The response that women take a greater interest than men was not allowed for, so presumably, the researchers did not expect this to be the case. Despite the evident bias in this question, the authors concluded that:

Although there were 19 unions where female interest was considered to be not less than that of males, an affirmative response merely indicates an equal and not a greater interest taken by women members.¹

Two questions were asked regarding the percentage of women members in unskilled, semi- and skilled occupations, and the promotional opportunities available to women. While this could have provided some valuable information its relevance was reduced as the researchers failed to ask the secretaries the same questions for the male members. Thus, there is no basis upon which the work experiences of the male and female members can be compared.

In selecting unions for the survey of 'rank and file' union members, the researchers again restricted the choice to those unions with a female membership of over 30%, but with a total female membership of over 100. Thereby, they hoped to concentrate on the

¹ A.J. Greare, et.al., Women in Trade Unions, p. 18. All further references to this work appear in the text.

mainstream of "female unions." The choice of unions was further restricted as the researchers wanted a sample which included district, provincial and national unions, both productive and service workers and skilled and unskilled workers. Eight unions were selected which met these criteria. Questionnaires were sent to a sample of members in these unions, chosen randomly from the union secretaries membership lists, thus, the male-female ratio in the sample surveyed was close to that of the whole union.

There was a 49% response rate, and 1,465 valid questionnaires were returned, of which, 903 were from women and 562 from men. As with the response rate for the survey of union secretaries, this was a reasonably high response for a postal survey. However, it is quite possible that the 49% who replied held different views than the 51% who did not. Thus there is a possibility of bias in the survey results.

The authors do not give the male-female ratio of the questionnaires sent out, so we cannot tell whether there was a greater response rate from males or females. However, as nearly twice as many women members replied as men, we can assume that the response rate for the women was much higher than for the men. If this is the case, there will inevitably be some bias in the results, particularly in the comparisons between the responses of the male and female members.

Apart from the final question, which asked for additional comments concerning the participation of women in union affairs, all the questions in the questionnaire sent to union members were closed-ended. While closed-ended questions may provide a uniform frame of reference and allow for more efficient coding, there is more potential for bias in the questionnaire, and less possibility of checking the

respondents interpretation of the questions.

In the questions relating to the barriers to greater participation, it is possible that some potential barriers were not included in the list. It is also possible that some of the potential barriers, such as "home responsibilities" may have been interpreted in different ways by the respondents.

One question which would have undoubtedly produced distorted results was, "Do you provide the major financial support for your household?" The different class positions of men and women in the production process means that when a husband and wife are both in paid employment the husband will almost invariably receive the higher income. Therefore, many respondents would have assumed that the husband makes the major financial contribution, even when the wife's income is equally necessary to the family's finances.

Personal interviews were held with 25 women union officials and postal questionnaires were sent to a further 16. The same questionnaire was used for both the personal and the postal surveys.

The questionnaires were of a slightly different format to those sent to union secretaries and 'rank and file' members. Few closed-ended questions were included, and they were concerned only with demographic characteristics. The majority of questions were open-ended, however, the authors often only gave their interpretations of the women officials answers and this may have resulted in some misinterpretation.

The Focus and Approach of the Study

In studying women in trade unions the authors focused almost entirely on the participation rates of women workers and the barriers to greater participation. They stated that the "major thrust [] of the study [] is directed at two basic questions: why is female participation in union affairs low and why have women not attained the level of responsibility and authority inside trade unions that would seem to be indicated by their numbers as union members and as members of the labour force?" (p. 10).

The authors saw the reasons for the low rate of participation of women in trade unions and the disproportionately small number in official positions as easily definable and surmountable. They do not appear to consider the low rate of participation as one aspect of a complex structure which places women in a subordinate position in the family, the workforce and consequently, the trade union movement.

Increased participation and more women in positions of authority within the trade unions will not necessarily lead to women's interests receiving greater representation for two reasons. Firstly, women are in a minority within the trade unions, partly because there are fewer women in paid employment but also because many women are employed in casual and part-time jobs and are not unionised. Thus, even if the participation rates and number of women in official positions was proportional to the female membership, they would still be a minority group, and the majority, men, could still prevent them from being effective in the unions. Secondly, union officials are elected, therefore to maintain their

position one can assume that women union officials have to be pragmatic, and cannot concentrate on the interests of a minority group. Therefore, women union officials do not necessarily represent the interests of the women members.

The authors were optimistically of the opinion that the increasing number of women in the labour-force was a "rough index of emancipation"(p 6) which they saw as the result of "changes in society's attitudes towards working women...improvements in household technology, part-time work, child-care arrangements and smaller families [] which enable women [] to substitute employment in the market for employment at home."(p. 7).

The authors also argued that "there has been a gradual increase in the number of women taking up what has traditionally been regarded as 'men's jobs'. Women are clearly playing an increasing role in the industrial life of the community and this trend is manifested both by their increasing numbers in the workforce and the widening range of occupations being undertaken by women."(p. 8).

The approach and focus of the study is based upon these inaccurate arguments. The authors have failed to take into account the fact that most women are employed in low paid, unskilled and labour-intensive occupations, that is they perform the function of workers, and the number performing the function of capital, or 'traditionally men's jobs' is extremely small. The mundane and arduous work of many women in paid employment is hardly an 'index of emancipation', particularly as, rather than being a substitute for home employment, women often add paid labour to their unpaid domestic labour, and undertake a dual working day.

Survey Results and Interpretations

Two main conclusions were reached from the survey of union secretaries. Firstly, that there was "an overwhelming impression that participation by both women and men is low, but that levels of participation for women are lower than men." (p. 8). Secondly, that "when the proportion of posts held by women in each union was compared with the proportion of women in the union, the participation levels appear much less encouraging. In virtually every case, women are seriously under-represented." (p. 21).

These conclusions do not tell us much about women in trade unions which was not already well known and which could not, as Sonja Davies points out, "be gleaned by spending half an hour on the telephone in each of the major cities." ¹ with union officials.

In the survey of union members there were few replies from women between the ages of 25 and 35. This would be undoubtedly due to the large number of women in this age group who leave the work-force to care for children in their home. The authors acknowledged this, but went on to demonstrate that they see this as a conscious choice by women, not as the result of social structures which define child-rearing as the work of women. They state:

This seems to confirm the stronger labour-

¹ "Women in Trade Unions with Particular Reference to the Public Service Association," P.S.A. Research Paper, No. 4 (1976), p. 5.

market attachment of those women who have no families or whose children are old enough to allow some discretion between home and work.(p. 26).

and

...the age and number of children obviously exert a strong influence on the ability of women to enter the labour force. (pp. 26-27)

In response to the question "Do you provide the major financial support for your household?" the authors argued that "very predictably, only 20 percent of the women compared with 80 percent of the men are major financial providers for the household." (p. 28). They see this response as lending some credence to the argument that "married women take up employment more for social than economic reasons."(p. 28). This conclusion contrasts radically with the findings of the survey of redundant women clothing workers at the Mosgeil factory. In that survey it was shown that many families relied heavily on the woman's wage, and that even though this wage was usually less than the husband's, loss of the wife's wage had a serious effect on the family's finances.¹

The authors also concluded that the high level of job

¹ Mary Hancock, It Just Doesn't Seem to Matter What Happens to Women: A Study of the Effects of the Collapse and Takeover of Mosgeil Ltd. (New Zealand Working Women's Council, 1981).

satisfaction(85%) expressed by the women members, despite the fact that 70% were in jobs in which they had no chance of promotion "is a suprising result only if it is accepted that women have the same deep commitment to work as men."(p. 30). This conclusion does not arise from the survey results, nor does it necessarily reflect the true view-point of the respondents. There were no questions which attempted to assess whether women have the same commitment to their paid work as men, and the authors conclusions are based entirely on thier own suppositions.

There were 307 women respondents who were part-time workers and 231 gave an affirmative reply to the question "I'm part-time and the union doesn't affect me." From this response the authors argued that "Unfortunately these attitudes encourage an exaggerated organisational response from union administration which tends to be completely negative towards part-timers and, ultimately, less than encouraging towards women members."(p. 37) This statement suggests that the unions negative response to part-timers and women workers is the fault of the women's attitudes.

The negative attitudes of women members was also seen to be reflected in the large number (70%) who answered that the general lack of interest in union affairs was a barrier to greater union participation. The authors state that there is "a depressingly large degree of apathy and indifference inside the female membership ranks to the union."(p. 34). This argument is extremely inadequate as an explanation of the low rate of participation in the trade unions of women members. As Judith Aitken states:

Attitudes do not spring from the forehead of
the new born - males, females or the general

public.

Attitudes are the product of systems. Historically based systems, where power is distributed in specific ways that almost without exception exclude women from effective power sharing.¹

Women's low rate of participation and the disproportionately few women in official positions in the unions is not caused by the apathy and indifference of the women members. Women cannot be held responsible for the power structure which places them in a subordinate position and gives men authority over women.

Twenty-five percent of the women respondents answered yes to the statement 'workers with more important jobs deserve union posts.' As the work-force is divided according to gender, 'workers with more important jobs' will almost invariably be men. Furthermore, 27% of the women answered that 'I am a woman and think that men are better at union affairs.' Despite the fact that over one quarter of the women respondents answered that they think the trade unions should be run by men, the authors concluded that this was a positive response, and proves that:

the stereotyped view of women unionists as a group on the fringes of the union movement with very little in common with men in terms

¹ Judith Aitken, "Political Priorities for the Women's Movement in the 1980's," Broadsheet, No. 92, Sept. 1981, p. 38.

of their familiarity with, and interest in union issues, is a little exaggerated. In fact,...nearly three-quarters of the female sample are convinced that men are not superior to women at union affairs.(p. 38).

The women union officials cited several main reasons for the low rate of participation by women members: lack of confidence, the dual-work load of many women and the 'foreign' nature of trade union procedure for many women.

The response that lack of confidence presented a barrier to greater participation was also apparent in some of the comment included from women members. For example: " 'I would be sadly lacking in confidence and I think you need to be a more forceful sort of person', 'Women are rather too shy to go to union meetings and stand up and speak at such meetings', 'I think a lot of women tend to think that unions belong to men.'"(p. 41).

Lack of confidence, like apathy and indifference, are not the inherent characteristic of women, but is a result of the power structure which places women in a subordinate position to men.

The authors argued that "there are encouraging signs that younger women realise that lack of confidence can also be shared by men and can be overcome. As a result they are more willing to stand up for themselves."(p. 41). They quote several comments from women members which they see as supporting this argument;

" 'Men at union meeting won't let women have their say and I think this is a disgrace',
 'Women tend to be treated as second-rate citizens with no logical approach to

situations and women have allowed this image to perpetuate itself', 'Single career girls would definitely take more interest if given the chance'."(p. 41).

The experiences cited in these comments are unlikely to be 'also shared by men' and show definite evidence of male dominance within the trade unions.

Many of the women officials stated that they felt ill at ease when they first became involved in union work. One women official, from a clerical union stated that "'it is still not possible for me as a women to feel at home in the union.'"(p. 42). The authors concluded from this comment that it "lends some credence to the view that for white collar unionists, preoccupied with occupational status, the union remains remote."(p. 42). An extremely odd conclusion, given that the statement was made by a woman actively engaged in the trade union movement.

Women's domestic labour was cited by several of the women officials as presenting a barrier for women who would like to become involved in union activities. However a few women officials stated that they thought women made domestic commitments an excuse to 'opt out', and could become active in the union if they wanted to. The authors supported this view and argued that it was reinforced by the fact that women members placed 'home responsibilities' fifth on the list of barriers to increased participation. Even though it was listed fifth, it constituted 62% of the female respondents, suggesting that for the majority of women members domestic work presents a real barrier.

The majority of women officials stated that they had

experienced no opposition from female union members, but two union secretaries stated that the women tended to resent the apparent freedom which seems to go with union work. From the unfavourable comments of these two women the authors concluded that "There is little hope for immediate change, if, as two women mentioned, negotiators are 'seldom backed up' by their own sex"(p. 45). and "It is not going to be easy in the immediate future for female candidates to overcome the combined forces of tradition, prejudice and lack of enthusiastic female backing."(pp. 47-48).

Evidence of opposition from male union members and official was reported by some of the women officials. The authors state, "Whether the occasional amusing remark or mild sexual joke meant that men did not take women officials seriously is a matter of conjecture."(p. 44). This was the authors' interpretation of comments made by women officials, the actual comments were not included. They go on to justify male opposition, stating that "Male union leaders, especially those in predominantly female unions, might be excused for feeling apprehensive that their positions of power and status are being jeopardised by women." (p. 44).

Several women members and officials mentioned that male union officials are preoccupied with problems affecting only males, and are not concerned with women workers. One women member stated that "men only look at aspects of work that affect themselves." (p. 44). This was also asserted in comments from women officials, for example, "everything in unions is based on the male as the breadwinner" what the authors would call providing the major financial support, and "not as much attention is paid to women by

male field officers."(pp. 44-45).

The survey on women union officials revealed the importance of the husband's support to women's union involvement. Sixteen of the women in the sample were married when they first became actively engaged in union activities, and ten of them had husbands who were also active in the trade union movement. Two women officials had been divorced and in both cases their husbands had disapproved of their union involvement. Two women had experienced strong antagonism from their husbands, "one it was stated showed his disapproval with his fists; one woman was afraid to stand up to her husband until the children were older in case 'he took it out on them.'"(p. 43).

It is quite apparent that the support and encouragement of the husband is essential if women are to become actively involved in trade unions, or as the authors state, "Positive support from husbands obviously helps encourage greater participation."(p. 43). Therefore, it is within the family that the major barriers to women's participation will be found, and any reforms implemented by the trade unions to encourage women's involvement will be unsuccessful if women do not have the approval of their husbands.

The authors do mention that women's low rate of participation may be linked to their position in the work-force. They state that the "status of women in the labour market can have a direct bearing on union participation,"(p. 50) and suggest easing the apprenticeship regulations and removing protective legislation so as to end the "compartmentalisation of 'feminine' jobs and 'masculine' jobs." However, they do not attempt to explain why the labour-force is 'compartmentalised' according to gender.

Conclusion

When the approach and conclusions of the study on women in trade unions by Greare, Herd and Howells are analysed in the context of the arguments of the class-gender structure, it can be seen that this study contains many inadequacies and inaccuracies. Firstly, the authors, while acknowledging that there is a division in the work-force according to gender, fail to discuss its relevance to the position of women in trade unions. The predominance of women in paid labour performing the function of workers results primarily from their work as child-rearers within the home. The division in the work-force is therefore resultant of the division of labour in the family. For the structure of the paid work-force to alter would need more than the removal of protective legislation on women workers and an easing of the apprenticeship regulations. To remove the class-gender division and have women moving into the higher-paid occupations would require a restructuring of the family and an end to the assignment of child-rearing as the function of women.

The authors do acknowledge that the work of child-care does effect women's membership in the paid labour-force, but they neither discuss the effects, nor the disadvantages this work present for women in the paid labour-force. Throughout the study the authors assume that child-rearing is work which women should perform.

Despite the evidence in this study of male dominance over women, in the trade unions, the work-force and within the family, the authors consistently dismissed it as 'old fashioned male

prejudices' or 'male attitudes' suggesting that they present a problem which can be relatively easily over-come.

It is therefore apparent that it is not possible to adequately discuss the position of women in trade unions or the labour-force without understanding the structure and causes of the class-gender division. In the following chapter the occupations and wages of women in New Zealand will be discussed in this context.

THE QUESTIONNAIRES

Questions asked in the survey of union secretaries, union members and women union officials, in the study by A.J.Geare, J.J.Herd and J.M.Howells.

1. QUESTIONNAIRE TO UNION SECRETARIES

INFORMATION ON WOMEN UNIONISTS

1. Name of Union _____
2. Total Union Membership _____
3. Total Female Membership _____
4. Roughly what percentage of the jobs held by your women members come into the categories listed below?
 - (a) Unskilled.....%
 - (b) Semi-skilled.....%
 - (c) Skilled.....%
5. We are interested in the opportunities that your women members have to be upgraded or promoted into higher status or a better paid job. What percentage of your women members are in:
 - (a) Jobs stopping at entry level.....%
 - (b) Jobs leading to 1 or 2 opportunities for advancement.....%
 - (c) Jobs leading to 3 or more opportunities for advancement.....%

6. Do you think women take as much interest in your union as men; (tick one)

Definitely Yes ()

Probably Yes ()

Not Sure ()

Probably No ()

Definitely No ()

7. What are the levels of participation of your members in the following union activities;

(a) Attendance at AGM's tends to be ,..

<u>For Women</u> (tick one)	<u>For Men</u> (tick one)
-----------------------------	---------------------------

High ()	High ()
----------	----------

Medium ()	Medium ()
------------	------------

Low ()	Low ()
---------	---------

What do you think are the reasons for this level in the case of women? Please elaborate.

(b) Attendance at regular branch meetings tends to be

<u>FOR WOMEN</u> (tick one)	<u>FOR MEN</u> (tick one)
-----------------------------	---------------------------

High ()	High ()
----------	----------

Medium ()	Medium ()
------------	------------

Low ()	Low ()
---------	---------

What do you think are the reasons for this level in the case of women?

(c) Willingness to run for union positions tends to be

<u>FOR WOMEN</u> (tick one)	<u>FOR MEN</u> (tick one)
High ()	High ()
Medium ()	Medium ()
Low ()	Low ()

What do you think are the reasons for this level in the case of women?

8. Do women serve in the following positions in your union? Please indicate both the number of positions where they exist in your union, and the number of women in these positions. If none, please write "0" so that all spaces are filled in.

	Number of Positions	Number of Women in Positions
National or Federation President	_____	_____
National or Federation Secretary	_____	_____
Member of National or Federation Executive	_____	_____
District President	_____	_____
District Secretary	_____	_____
District Executive	_____	_____
Branch President	_____	_____
Branch Secretary	_____	_____
Branch Vice-President	_____	_____

9. Do you consider that the number of women in all union positions (including delegates and shop stewards) tends to be

High ()

Medium ()

Low ()

What do you think are the reasons for this?

10. What time of day is the AGM usually held?

What time of day are branch meetings usually held?

11. Has your union made any changes or arrangements to encourage greater participation by women? (tick one)

Yes () No ()

If yes, list changes that have been made

12. Have you any additional comments on women's participation in the activities of your own union?

2. QUESTIONNAIRE TO UNION MEMBERS
ON UNION ACTIVITIES

1. Please indicate your:

- | | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----|
| (a) Sex (tick one) | Female | () |
| | Male | () |
| (b) Age (tick one) | 24 or under | () |
| | 25 - 34 | () |
| | 35 - 44 | () |
| | 45 - 54 | () |
| | 55 or over | () |
| (c) Married status (tick one) | Married | () |
| | Separated,
divorced,
widowed | () |
| | Single | () |

2. How many children, if any, do you have in the following age groups?

- | | | |
|--|---------------|-----|
| (a) Under 5 years (tick one) | None | () |
| | One or two | () |
| | Three or more | () |
| (b) 5 years to under 15 years (tick one) | | |
| | None | () |
| | One or two | () |
| | Three or more | () |

- (c) 15 years and over (tick one) None ()
One or two ()
three or more ()

3. Do you provide the major financial support for your household? (tick one) Yes ()
No ()

4. Please indicate whether you have any of the following qualifications

- (a) Two years secondary school (tick one)
Yes ()
No ()

- (b) School Certificate (tick one)
Yes ()
No ()

- (c) University Entrance (tick one)
Yes ()
No ()

- (d) Trade, technical or clerical qualification (tick one)
Yes ()
No ()

- (e) Professional qualification (tick one)
Yes ()
No ()

5. Please indicate which one of the following applies to you (tick one)

I have just started work in the last two years ()

I have worked, stopped for children, returned to work again ()

I have worked, stopped for other reasons, returned to work ()

I have always had a job since I started work ()

6. Is your job with this employer: (tick one)

Full-time ()

Part-time ()

7. Taking into account the work, conditions, work mates, etc., how satisfied are you with your job? (tick one)

Completely satisfied ()

Fairly satisfied ()

Neutral ()

Fairly dissatisfied ()

Completely dissatisfied ()

8. Are there opportunities for promotion of any sort from the job you now hold? (tick one)

Yes, plenty ()

Yes, a few ()

No ()

Not sure ()

9. How long have you been a member of this union?

- (tick one)
- | | |
|----------------------------|-----|
| Less than 1 year | () |
| 1 year-less than 3 years | () |
| 3 years-less than 5 years | () |
| 5 years-less than 10 years | () |
| 10 years or over | () |

10. Please indicate whether you have ever:

(a) Attended a social event run by the union?

- (tick one)
- | | |
|-----|-----|
| Yes | () |
| No | () |

(b) Attended an educational course run by the union?

- (tick one)
- | | |
|-----|-----|
| Yes | () |
| No | () |

(c) Been on a sports or social committee of the

- union? (tick one)
- | | |
|-----|-----|
| Yes | () |
| No | () |

(d) Used the official disputes or grievance

- procedure? (tick one)
- | | |
|-----|-----|
| Yes | () |
| No | () |

(e) Attended a branch meeting of the union?

- (tick one)
- | | |
|-----|-----|
| Yes | () |
| No | () |

(f) Attended an AGM of the union? (tick one)

- | | |
|-----|-----|
| Yes | () |
| No | () |

(g) Voted in a union election? (tick one)

Yes ()

No ()

(h) Stood for any union post? (tick one)

Yes ()

No ()

(i) Been elected as an officer of the branch,
district or national executive? (tick one)

Yes ()

No ()

(j) Been elected as a delegate, shop steward or
union representative? (tick one)

Yes ()

No ()

11. Do any of the following things seriously prevent
you from joining in fully in union affairs?

(a) Home responsibilities (tick one)

Yes ()

No ()

(b) Lack of information about union (tick one)

Yes ()

No ()

(c) Having too many other outside activities
(tick one)

Yes ()

No ()

(d) Lack of confidence (tick one)

Yes ()

No ()

(e) Having no one to go to meetings with (tick one)

Yes ()

No ()

(f) Not knowing enough people at meetings

(tick one) Yes ()

No ()

(g) Husband/wife not agreeing with my being active

in the union (tick one) Yes ()

No ()

(h) I am not interested in union affairs (tick one)

Yes ()

No ()

(i) There is a general lack of interest in union

affairs (tick one) Yes ()

No ()

(j) I just don't feel up to it (tick one)

Yes ()

No ()

(ALTERNATIVE (k) TO BE ANSWERED BY WOMEN ONLY)

(k) I am a woman and think men are better at

union affairs (tick one) Yes ()

No ()

12. Do any of the following things related to your job
seriously prevent you from joining in union affairs?

(a) The supervisor makes life hard for active

unionists (tick one) Yes ()

No ()

(b) Promotion prospects are more difficult for
active unionists (tick one) Yes ()

No ()

(c) I am working an awkward shift (tick one)

Yes ()

No ()

(d) I work part-time and the union doesn't affect
me much (tick one) Yes ()

No ()

(e) I feel workers with important jobs deserve
union positions (tick one) Yes ()

No ()

(f) I feel people who have been here longer should
run the union (tick one) Yes ()

No ()

13. Do any of the following things related to the union
seriously prevent you from joining in union affairs?

(a) The place where union meetings are held
(tick one) Yes ()

No ()

(b) The time of day when union meetings are held
(tick one) Yes ()

No ()

(c) Lack of child care arrangements for union meet-
ings (tick one) Yes ()

No ()

(d) Lack of encouragement by the union for me to

be active (tick one) Yes ()

No ()

(e) Lack of information by the union as to what is
accomplished in the union by people like me

(tick one) Yes ()

No ()

(f) Lack of educational programmes organised by the
union (tick one) Yes ()

No ()

(g) Lack of training by the union on some of the
things a person needs to be a leader (tick one)

Yes ()

No ()

(h) Lack of recognition by the union to people

who do union work (tick one) Yes ()

No ()

14. Do you think more women should run for union office?

(tick one) Definitely
yes ()

Probably
yes ()

Not sure ()

Probably
no ()

Definitely
no ()

15. Do you think women generally take as much interest
in the union as men?

Definitely
yes ()

Probably
yes ()

Not sure ()

Probably
no ()

Definitely
no ()

16. Do you think the union takes as much interest in
its women members as it does in its men members?

(tick one)

Definitely
yes ()

Probably
yes ()

Not sure ()

Probably
no ()

Definitely
no ()

17. (a) If you have not been on a union educational course
would you be willing to go on one if you were
selected? (tick one)

Yes ()

No ()

(b) If you have not stood for any union past, would
you be prepared to stand if you were asked to?

(tick one) Yes ()

No ()

(c) If you do not attend branch meetings, would you be prepared to attend if it was made easier for you to attend? (tick one) Yes ()

No ()

18. Would you like to add any additional comments concerning the participation of women in union affairs?

3. QUESTIONNAIRE FOR WOMEN LEADERS

Personal information on Interviewee

Name

Home address

Age

Marital status

Number of children

Ages of children:

Under 5

5 to 15

Over 5

1. Does the person provide the major financial support
for the household?

Educational qualification:

2 years secondary school

School Certificate

University Entrance

Trade, Technical or Clerical
qualification

Professional qualification

2. Union background

Name of Union

Actual Union Position

Total time in union (a) this particular union

(b) all unions (if different
from (a))

Total time in present post

Is present union post:

full-time or part-time?

salaried or honorarium (how much?)

elected or appointed?

permanency of tenure

What occupation does the person class herself?

3. How did you first become involved in doing something
in the union?

Encouraged by someone? (friend, union steward,
union officer, husband.....)

Or volunteer for some activity you were particularly
interested in?

Had become interested in organisation like P.T.A.,
Voice of Women, which encouraged you to become
active in the union?

Felt the union was male dominated and that attitudes
to women and women's issues needed changing?

When did you first become involved?

How long had you been working before getting involved?

(b) What exactly did you feel at first?

How much time did it take to feel at home in the union?

(c) Were you married when you first became active in the union?

If so, how did your husband feel about it?

Was he active in his union?

(d) Did you have any children then?

If so, how did you manage about their care?

(e) Have you married since first becoming active in the union?

If so, how did your husband feel about it?
Was he active?

(f) Have you had any children since becoming active?

If so, how do you manage about their care?

4. Did the activity lead to others?

(a) What do you think was the most important reason or event that led up to your present union work?

(b) Would you say that there is some resentment to the idea of women being active in the union?

From your fellow workers - Men? Women?

Do you think you are treated the same as male union leaders by your employer?

(c) What other groups or activities are you involved in, if any?

Do you take an active interest in politics?

Are you a member of a political party?

5. What do you like best about working in the union?
Do you see any problems for you if you wanted to be more active in the union?
6. What do you like least about working in the union?
7. If another women were to ask your advice on how to go about getting involved in the union, what would you tell her?

Would you recommend it? Why?

Would you not recommend it? Why not?
8. Do you think of anything that could be done by the union to encourage women to be active?
9. What do you think holds women back from becoming involved?
10. Do you feel that male union leaders press as hard for demands made made by women members as they might do for male members?
11. How do men react to you being a women union leader?
12. How do women react to your being a women union leader?

CHAPTER THREE

WOMEN'S OCCUPATIONS AND INCOMES

Introduction

The different class positions within the production process are, in most capitalist societies, segregated according to gender. In New Zealand the division between the type of paid work in which men and women are engaged can be clearly seen in the governmental statistics on wages and occupations. Although these statistics are not compiled in a manner designed to illustrate class locations, the position in the production process can be ascertained from the occupation classifications, and wage levels which provide a rough indication of the agents class position.

Governmental statistics can also, to a limited extent, show the effects of marriage and children on women's employment in paid labour. However, they can only indirectly show the effects marriage and child-rearing have on women's class position within the production process.

Using government statistics on women's paid labour in New Zealand, this chapter focuses on women's occupations and income levels in order to illustrate the class-gender divisions within the production process in New Zealand.

TABLE 1

THE WORKFORCE - OCCUPATIONAL PERCENTAGES: 1976*¹

<u>Occupational Group</u>	<u>Female % of Female Work Force</u>	<u>Male % of Male Work Force</u>	<u>Female % in each Occupational Group</u>
Professional, Technical and Related Workers	18.2(17.2)	12.1(10.4)	41.4(41.2)
Administrative, Executive and Managerial	0.7(0.3)	4.4(3.5)	7.0(3.7)
Clerical Workers	33.4(33.1)	8.1(8.9)	66.0(61.2)
Sales Workers	11.7(11.6)	9.0(9.8)	38.0(33.6)
Agricultural, Animal Husbandry and Forest Workers, Fishermen and Hunters	5.4(5.2)	12.6(14.3)	16.9(13.3)
Production Workers, Trans- port Equipment Operators and Labourers	16.1(17.4)	46.6(46.6)	14.0(13.7)
Service Workers (including Armed Forces)	12.2(13.9)	5.4(5.4)	51.7(52.2)
Occupation nec	2.3(1.4)	1.8(1.0)	36.3(37.3)
Total	100.0(100.0)	100.0(100.0)	100.0(100.0)

* Figures in brackets refer to 1971 percentages

nec = not elsewhere classified

¹ Compiled from Department of Labour, Women in the Workforce:
Facts and Figures ((Wellington: Research and Planning Division, 1980),
table 11, p. 22.

TABLE 2

OCCUPATION GROUPS CONTAINING THE LARGEST
NUMBER OF FEMALES 1976¹

<u>Occupation Minor Group</u>	<u>Female</u>	
	<u>Females</u> <u>Engaged</u>	<u>Percent</u> <u>of Total</u>
Clerical (1) nec	57,070	63.2
Stenographers, typists and card and tape-punching machine operators	37,253	98.8
Salesworkers, shop assistants	34,721	63.6
Teachers	30,326	57.1
Medical, dental, veterinary (1)	29,198	71.4
Bookkeepers, cashiers (1)	25,509	63.9
Tailors, dressmakers, sewers, upholsterers (1)	20,163	80.6
Cooks, waiters, bartenders (1)	13,225	67.3
Agricultural and animal husbandry workers	11,711	24.7
Farmers	9,957	14.8
Cleaners and related housekeeping service workers	8,492	92.0
Material handling and related equipment operators, dockers and freight handlers	7,821	17.4
Service workers nec	7,158	64.4
Working proprietors (wholesale and retail trade)	7,144	37.4

(1) Includes related workers

¹ Compiled from Women in the Workforce, table 12, p. 23.

TABLE 3

OCCUPATION GROUPS CONTAINING THE
LARGEST NUMBER OF MALES 1976¹

<u>Occupation Minor Group</u>	<u>Males</u> <u>Engaged</u>	<u>Male</u> <u>Percent</u> <u>of Total</u>
Farmers	57,204	85.2
Bricklayers, carpenters and other construction workers	53,461	99.7
Machinery fitters, machine assemblers and precision-instrument makers (except electrical)	50,555	96.3
Transport equipment operators	40,955	96.0
Food and beverage processors	38,358	89.5
Managers (excluding those in wholesale and retail trade, catering and lodging services and farming)	37,272	93.0
Material handling and related equipment operators, dockers and freight handlers	37,038	82.6
Agricultural and animal husbandry workers	35,765	75.3
Labourers nec.	34,043	84.6
Clerical and related workers nec	33,295	36.8
Architects, engineers and related technicians	29,892	94.5
Electrical fitters and related electrical and electronics workers	26,689	88.3
Plumbers, welders, sheetmetal and structural metal preparers and erectors	25,595	97.3
Teachers	22,785	42.9

¹ Compiled from Women in the Workforce, table 13, p. 24.

TABLE 4

MINOR OCCUPATION (CLERICAL AND RELATED WORKERS)BY SEX¹

<u>Occupation</u>	<u>1971</u>		<u>1976</u>	
	<u>Male %</u>	<u>Female %</u>	<u>Male %</u>	<u>Female %</u>
Clerical supervisors	89.7	10.3	77.5	22.5
Government executive officials	96.1	3.9	91.7	8.3
Stenographers, typists and card and tape-punching machine operators	1.5	98.5	1.2	98.8
Bookkeepers and cashiers ⁽¹⁾	45.9	54.1	68.1	31.9
Computing machine operators	8.1	91.9	11.9	88.1
Transport and communication supervisors	97.9	2.1	95.8	4.2
Transport conductors	99.7	0.3	99.6	0.4
Mail distribution clerks	58.1	41.9	52.2	47.8
Telephone and telegraph operators	18.3	81.7	22.0	78.0
Clerical nec	36.8	63.2	44.3	55.7
Total	38.8%	61.2%	34.0%	66.0%

(1) Includes related workers

nec = not elsewhere classified

1 Compiled from Department of Statistics, New Zealand Census of Population and Dwellings: Labour Force, 1976, Bulletin 16, table 2, pp. 4-5;

TABLE 5

MINOR OCCUPATION (SERVICE WORKERS)BY SEX ¹

<u>Occupation</u>	<u>1971</u>		<u>1976</u>	
	<u>Male %</u>	<u>Female %</u>	<u>Male %</u>	<u>Female %</u>
Managers (catering and lodging services)	62.7	37.3	59.1	40.9
Working proprietors (catering and lodging services)	58.5	41.5	56.2	43.8
Housekeepers and related service supervisors	7.9	92.1	9.3	90.7
Cooks waiters and bartenders ⁽¹⁾	33.7	66.3	32.7	67.3
Housekeeping service workers ⁽¹⁾	10.5	89.5	8.0	92.0
Builders, caretakers, cleaners and charworkers ⁽¹⁾	55.9	44.1	51.4	48.6
Launders, drycleaners and pressers	31.1	68.9	29.7	70.3
Hairdressers, barbers and beauticians	24.4	75.6	19.1	80.9
Protective service workers	95.4	4.6	95.0	5.0
Service workers nec	36.2	63.8	35.6	64.6
Total	48.8%	51.2%	48.3%	51.7%

(1) Includes related workers
nec = not elsewhere classified

1 Compiled from New Zealand Census of Population and Dwellings, 1976, table 2, p.5.

TABLE 6

MINOR OCCUPATION (SALES WORKERS)

<u>Occupation</u>	<u>BY SEX</u> ¹			
	<u>1971</u>		<u>1976</u>	
	<u>Male %</u>	<u>Female %</u>	<u>Male %</u>	<u>Female %</u>
Managers (wholesale and retail trade)	87.5	12.5	83.6	16.4
Working proprietors (wholesale and retail trade)	63.0	37.0	62.6	37.4
Sales supervisors and buyers	90.3	9.7	87.1	12.9
Technical salesworkers, commercial travellers and manufacturers agents	97.7	2.3	93.2	6.8
Insurance, real estate, securities and business salesworkers and auctioneers	96.2	3.8	92.5	7.5
Salesworkers and shop assistants ⁽¹⁾	41.0	59.0	36.4	63.6
Salesworkers nec	71.4	28.6	75.2	24.8
Total	66.4	33.6	62.0	38.0

(1) Includes related workers
nec not elsewhere classified

¹ Compiled from New Zealand Census of Population and Dwellings, 1976, table 2, p. 5.

Occupations

Tables 1, 2 and 3 show clearly that certain occupations are performed almost exclusively by one sex. Ninety-nine percent of all stenographers, typists and card and tape-punching machine operators were women in 1976, as were 92% of all cleaners and related housekeeping service workers, and 81% of the tailors, dressmakers, sewers and upholsterers. Ninety-nine percent of all bricklayers, carpenters, and other construction workers were men, as were 96% of the machinery fitters, machine assemblers and precision instrument makers, and 95% of the architects, engineers and related technicians.

Not only is there a segregation of occupations according to gender, but there are more occupations which employ almost exclusively men than those that employ predominantly women.

The class division between men and women in paid employment can be seen in tables 4, 5 and 6. Within the occupations classified as 'clerical and related workers' and 'service workers' women are numerically stronger than men, and within the occupation 'salesworkers' women constitute a large proportion of the employees, yet, in all three occupations it is primarily men who hold the supervisory, managerial and executive positions, that is, perform the functions of capital, and skilled positions.

Although 66% of all clerical workers were women in 1976, 78% of the clerical supervisors were men, as were 92% of the government executive officials, and 96% of the transport and communication supervisors. Only 48% of the 'service workers' were men in 1976, yet 59% of the managers of catering and lodging services were men

TABLE 7

NEW ZEALAND AGE - SPECIFIC LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATIONRATES BY SEX ¹

<u>Age-Group</u>	<u>Census Year</u>					
	<u>1971</u>		<u>1976</u>		<u>1981</u> ²	
	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
15-19	15.7	56.9	56.3	51.1	56.6	49.2
20-24	91.0	54.9	91.2	58.8	91.1	63.4
25-29	97.8	29.6	97.5	36.0	96.8	41.0
30-34	98.7	29.4	98.4	35.5	97.6	39.1
35-39	98.8	35.8	98.6	44.4	97.4	47.7
40-44	98.6	39.1	98.3	48.5	97.5	54.7
45-49	98.0	40.0	97.7	46.6	96.8	54.0
50-54	96.3	35.2	95.9	40.6	95.1	43.7
55-59	92.1	27.5	90.5	29.0	88.8	33.9
60-64	69.2	15.5	57.9	13.9	45.8	12.9
65+	21.3	3.5	16.2	2.8	10.9	1.9
15+	81.2	33.8	79.5	36.6	77.4	38.6

1 Compiled from Women in the Workforce, table 3, p. 10.

2 Compiled from Department of Statistics, New Zealand Census of Population and Dwellings: Provisional National Statistics, Bulletin 2 (1981), table 5, p. 18.

as were 56% of the working proprietors, but only 8% of the cleaners and related housekeeping service workers. The preponderance of men performing the function of capital was also evident among 'sales-workers'. Eighty-four percent of the managers, 63% of the working proprietors and 87% of the sales supervisors were men. All the specialised selling jobs, such as insurance, real estate and business and service sales workers and auctioneers(93%), technical salesworkers, commercial travellers and manufacturers agents(93%) were held predominantly by men, while the majority of non-specialised sales-workers and shop assistants(64%) were women.

Work-force Participation Rates

Table 7 shows that the working life of males and females tends to be quite different. While the number of men in paid employment was low in the 15-19 age group(56%), in 1976, it was much higher in the 20-24 age group(91%) and at its highest point in the 35-39 age group(99%). In the older age groups participation rates were much lower, with 58% in the 60-64 age group and 16% in the over 65 group.

For women the percentage in paid employment was also low in the 15-19 age group(51%), but it was also comparatively low in the 20-24 age group(59%), and very low in the 25-34 age group(36%). In the 40-44 group it was slightly higher(49%), but the participation rate was low in the over 49 age groups.

The most noticeable factor emerging from table 7 is that over half the women, but only 3% of the men were out of the full-time labour-force between the ages of 25 and 34.

TABLE 8

FEMALE LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION BY AGE
AND MARITAL STATUS (1976) ¹

<u>Age</u>	<u>Never-Married</u>	<u>Married</u>	<u>Legally-Separated</u>	<u>Widowed</u>	<u>Divorced</u>
16-19	64.8	40.3	33.6	38.5	55.6
20-24	83.2	44.0	43.9	36.6	58.2
25-29	83.6	28.8	41.4	25.2	54.9
30-34	80.0	31.5	42.0	29.2	56.5
35-39	80.6	41.7	52.2	34.9	65.2
40-44	79.9	46.3	57.0	36.5	67.3
45-49	78.1	44.2	57.5	37.7	68.7
50-54	73.7	37.8	53.7	34.2	66.4
55-59	60.8	25.5	44.4	26.6	57.8
60-64	30.5	11.4	20.9	13.9	27.6
65-69	13.3	3.9	8.4	5.6	10.8
70-74	4.8	1.3	1.1	2.3	5.4
75+	1.5	0.6	1.3	0.5	2.3
16+	66.4	32.6	44.5	9.6	51.1

¹ Compiled from Women in the Workforce, table 8, p. 16.

TABLE 9

LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATES OF FEMALE HEADS OF SPOUSES
OF FAMILY HOUSEHOLDS WITH CHILDREN UNDER 15 YEARS OLD (1976)¹

<u>Age of</u> <u>Youngest Child</u>	<u>Percent Actively Engaged</u>		<u>Multi-person</u> <u>Household</u>	<u>Total Family</u> <u>Households</u>
	<u>One Family Only</u> <u>Complete</u>	<u>Incomplete</u>		
0	7.1	8.6	19.3	9.2
1	9.9	11.2	22.0	11.8
2	13.9	13.3	22.8	15.2
3	18.3	17.6	26.3	19.4
4	22.2	21.6	27.7	22.9
5	29.9	28.0	31.8	29.9
6	38.8	33.7	37.6	37.6
7	42.2	38.2	40.0	41.4
8	44.6	40.2	41.3	43.6
9	45.6	42.7	43.0	44.8
10	48.2	43.5	41.7	46.6
11	49.4	44.0	43.0	47.7
12	50.2	45.4	42.1	48.3
13	50.9	47.5	44.3	49.5
14	49.0	49.2	44.9	48.5
0-4	13.1	15.0	22.9	14.7
5-14	43.7	41.4	40.4	43.0
0-14	27.7	33.4	30.6	28.8

DEFINITIONS

Total Family Households Comprise:

- (i) 'One Family (Complete)'
- (ii) 'One Family (Incomplete)' where one or more family members are absent either temporarily or permanently.
- (iii) 'Multi-person household' made up of two or more families with or without other persons and households comprising a single family with other persons.

¹ compiled from Women in the Workforce, table 31, p. 59.

TABLE 10

PART-TIME AND FULL-TIME EMPLOYMENTBY SEX ¹

<u>Surveyed Employment</u>	<u>May 1981</u>	<u>May 1982P</u>	<u>% change</u>
<u>Full-time Employees</u>			
Males	573,712	576,817	0.5
Females	299,010	304,746	1.9
All Persons	872,722	881,563	1.0
<u>Part-time Employees</u>			
Males	32,900	33,227	1.0
Females	121,539	126,136	3.8
All Persons	154,439	156,363	3.2
<u>Total Employment</u>			
Males	664,619	668,461	0.6
Females	444,341	456,044	2.6
All Persons	1,108,960	1,124,505	1.4

P=Provisional

¹ Compiled from Department of Labour, Wages, Hours and Employment (Wellington:Research and Planning Division, May 1982), table 1,

TABLE 11

PART-TIME AND FULL-TIME EMPLOYMENT PERCENTAGESBY SEX (MAY 1981)¹

<u>May 1981</u>	<u>Full-time</u> <u>Employees</u>	<u>Part-time</u> <u>Employees</u>	<u>Total</u>
Males	65.7	21.3	59.1
Females	34.3	78.7	40.9
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<hr/>			
Males%	94.6	5.4	100.0%
Females%	71.1	28.9	100.0%
Total%	85.0	15.0	100.0%

1 Complied from Wages, Hours and Employment, table 1, p. 8.

From table 8 one can see that marriage has a notable effect on women's participation in the paid labour-force. 'Never married' women were more likely to be in paid employment than other groups of women, at all ages. 'Divorced' women were the second most likely followed by 'legally separated' women then 'married' women and finally 'widowed' women.

In table 9, the relationship between children and women's paid employment is shown. Overall, women's labour-force participation was highest among women in the 'one family only (incomplete)' households. In households where the youngest child was a pre-schooler, participation for women was highest in the 'multi-persons' households. Where the youngest child was of school age, the participation rate was highest in the 'one family (complete)' households. In all categories the rate of participation for women increased with the age of the youngest child, increasing substantially when the youngest child was 5 years old. Thus, in all types of households, if the youngest child was of school age, the mother was more likely to be in full-time employment, than if the youngest child was a pre-schooler.

The number of women engaged in part-time work is another significant factor in women's participation rates. Table 11 shows that in May 1981 79% of all part-time employees were female, and that over one quarter (29%) of the female work-force were employed part-time, compared to only 5% of the total male work-force. According to Women in the Workforce, the vast majority of women who work part-time are married. They state that "married women comprise 80.6 percent of the part-time female labour force, (i.e.)

TABLE 12

POPULATION ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN THE LABOUR FORCE

BY SEX AND INCOME (1976)* 1

<u>Income Group</u>	<u>Males</u>		<u>Females</u>	
\$		%		%
Nil	5,624	0.7	7,885	1.9
1-499	9,412	1.1	17,248	4.2
500-999	9,526	1.1	15,926	3.9
1,000-1,499	9,749	1.1	20,059	4.9
1,500-1,999	10,018	1.2	20,342	5.0
2,000-2,499	19,276	2.2	34,704	8.5
2,500-2,999	33,788	3.9	45,348	11.1
3,000-3,999	84,761	9.8	82,384	20.2
4,000-4,999	129,458	15.0	66,129	16.2
5,000-5,999	158,407	18.3	47,781	11.7
6,000-6,999	110,884	12.8	19,956	4.9
7,000-9,999	174,313	20.1	16,873	4.2
10,000-14,999	66,763	7.7	3,353	.8
15,000-19,999	14,104	1.6	522	.1
20,000 and over	14,387	1.7	491	.1
Not Specified	14,628	1.7	8,299	2.0
TOTAL	865,098	100.0	407,235	100.0

* Actively engaged refers to persons working 20 hours pr more
per week

1 Compiled from Women in the Workforce, table 24, p. 43.

TABLE 13

MEDIAN INCOME OF LABOUR-FORCE MEMBERS AT
POPULATION CENSUSES 1951-1977 ¹

<u>Population</u>	<u>Female Median</u>	<u>Male Median</u>	<u>Female Median</u>
<u>Census</u>	<u>Income \$</u>	<u>Income \$</u>	<u>Income as % of</u>
			<u>Male Median Income</u>
1951	471	946	49.8
1956	725	1,465	49.5
1961	896	1,816	49.3
1966	1,147	2,229	51.5
1971	1,630	3,146	51.8
1976	3,718	5,718	60.4

TABLE 14

FEMALE WEEKLY EARNINGS AS A PERCENTAGE
OF MALE EARNINGS ²

April 1974	69.7
April 1975	72.1
April 1976	75.1
April 1977	75.6
April 1978	75.5
April 1979	75.7

1 Compiled from Department of Statistics, New Zealand Males and Females: A Statistical Comparison, Bulletin 1, Miscellaneous Series, No. 1, table 32, p. 25.

2 Compiled from Women in the Workforce, table 25, p. 44.

TABLE 15

EARNINGS BY SEX (ALL SECTORS) ¹

<u>Earnings</u>	<u>May 1981</u>	<u>May 1982P</u>	<u>% Change</u>
<u>Average Ordinary</u>			
<u>Hourly Rate (\$/Hour)</u>			
Males	6.68	7.85	17.5
Females	5.21	6.11	17.3
All Persons	6.14	7.02	17.3
<u>Average Overtime</u>			
<u>Hourly Rate (\$/Hour)</u>			
Males	8.87	10.35	16.7
Females	7.30	8.21	12.5
All Persons	8.64	10.05	16.3
<u>Average Ordinary</u>			
<u>Weekly Earnings (\$)</u>			
Males	251.24	294.37	17.2
Females	185.91	220.16	18.4
All Persons	226.50	265.97	17.4
<u>Average Total</u>			
<u>Weekly Earnings (\$)</u>			
Males	273.83	321.96	17.6
Females	191.18	226.08	18.3
All Persons	242.53	285.27	17.6

P Provisional

¹ Compiled from Wages, Hours and Employment, table 1, p. 8.

those working less than 20 hours per week, at the time of the 1976 census." ¹

It can be clearly seen that marriage and children greatly influence the structure of women's participation in the work-force. The broken work pattern of many women and the large numbers who undertake part-time work can be directly attributed to marriage and child-rearing. As class mobility in to managerial, supervisory and executive positions is often dependent on an unbroken involvement in the paid labour-force, and as these positions are almost inevitably full-time, women are prevented from moving into these positions. Thus, women's restriction to performing the function of workers is connected to marriage and their function as child-rearers.

The class division between men and women in paid employment can also be ascertained from the differences in their income levels.

Income Levels

Tables 12,13,14 and 15 show the wide discrepancies between men's and women's income levels. In table 12 it can be seen that 60% of women employed for 20 hours per week or more, in 1976, had an annual income of less than \$4,000, compared to 21% of the men. Thirty three percent of the women earned between \$4,000 and \$7,000 annually, compared to 16% of the men, and only 5% of the women, but 31% of the men, earned over \$7,000.

¹ Women in the Workforce, p. 15.

Tables 13, 14 and 15 show that there has been little improvement in the disparity between men's and women's wages in recent years. In 1951 women's median income was only 50% of the male median income, women's median income had increased by 1971, but only to 52% of the male median income. In 1976 the median female income was only 60% of the median male income, despite the introduction of the Equal Pay Act in 1972.

Similarly, the hourly wage rate of women remains substantially lower than that of men, and this disparity appears to be increasing rather than being reduced. Table 15 shows that from May 1981 to May 1982 men's average ordinary hourly wage rate increased by 17.5% and women's increased by 17.3%. Men's average overtime rate increased by 16.7%, but women's increased by only 12.5%.

The income differential between men and women in paid employment may be due in part, to the large numbers of women who work part-time and to fewer women working overtime. However, women's shorter working hours, like their broken work patterns, can often be directly attributed to their work as child-rearers.

The large discrepancy between the income levels of men and women is also indicative of the class-gender division. Agents performing the functions of capital generally receive a higher income than those performing the function of workers for two main reasons. Firstly, capitals functionaries are paid out of the surplus-value, while workers are paid for their labour-power, which is always less than the value of the commodities they produce. Secondly, agents performing the function of capital receive a higher income as this contributes to legitimizing their authority over workers in the capitalist production

process, and gives the appearance that their work is more essential than that of the workers.

Conclusion

It is apparent that within the New Zealand labour-force a class-gender division exists. The statistics on employment show clearly that men and women are segregated within the paid work-force and that women are restricted to a small range of occupations. While men occupy all class positions within the production process, women are concentrated in to performing the function of workers.

The statistical evidence also confirms that women's class position is linked with their work as child-rearers. Over half the women in the 24 to 39 age group are absent from paid employment, and this will almost invariably be because they are involved with caring for children. Many women leave the work-force when their first child is born and do not return until the youngest child begins school, and even then they often undertake part-time employment. This broken work pattern means women are often not able to acquire class mobility into occupations in which they perform the functions of capital.

Hence, women are denied class mobility because of their work in child-rearing and are restricted to the low paying occupations. While men, because they are free of the demands of child-rearing are able to move into the higher paid jobs in which they act as capitals functionaries.

CONCLUSION

Within the New Zealand work-force, as in most advanced capitalist societies, women are predominantly engaged in performing the function of workers, and this is usually the only function they perform within the production process. The majority of agents acting as capitals funcionarios are men. Thus, almost all the higher paid positions, in which the agent has some control over the production process, are held by men. While most women who are in paid employment, are in the lower paid positions, in which they neither have control over the pace of their own production, nor that of others.

The division of classes in the production process according to gender, is not created within the work-force, but originates within the family, in which women are assigned the work of child-rearing. The direct result of this assignment is that many women have a broken work pattern. Many women are absent from paid employment between the ages of 24 and 39. They usually leave paid work when their first child is born and do not return until their youngest child begins school, even then women often undertake part-time work to fit in with the children's school hours. Thus, women are absent from the work-force during the time when men are often acquiring work related skills and gaining promotions which enables them to move into jobs in which

they perform the function of capital. When women return to the paid labour-force after the break to care for children, they almost inevitably return to jobs in which they perform the function of workers, particularly if they are employed part-time. Hence, women's work in child-care contributes directly to the creation of the class-gender division.

The assignment of child-rearing to women therefore places women in a disadvantageous position within paid labour, and, because men do not usually undertake the work of child-care, they are more able to acquire class mobility and all the advantages associated with performing the functions of capital within the production process.

The class-gender division in turn gives men authority within the family. When both the husband and wife are in paid employment, they often occupy different class positions, and consequently the husband usually receives the higher income. Thus, he is seen to be the major financial provider for the family. When the woman is engaged full-time in caring for children, the husband's income is often the only source of the family's finances. This inevitably places the husband in a position of authority within the family, and enables him to reinforce the assignment of child-rearing to the woman.

Female child-rearing therefore structures women's work-force participation, and the resultant class-gender division reinforces child-rearing as women's work.

However, even women who are not mothers are affected by the assignment of child-rearing to women. When women are denied promotion or training because it is assumed they are only temporarily engaged in paid labour, and will eventually leave to rear children, they are subject to the same disadvantages as women involved in caring for children, and are also often restricted to performing the function of workers. As women are less able to gain class mobility and the accompanying higher wages, within the family it appears more logical for the women than the man, to give up paid labour to care for children. Thus, the structure of the class-gender division limits women's options to motherhood.

Female child-rearing and the class-gender division are therefore intrinsic to the position of women in society and, in particular, the work-force. An analysis of any aspect of women's waged labour must therefore take these factors into consideration.

The study on women in trade unions by Greare, Herd and Howells fails to fully comprehend the position of women in paid employment, and trade unions, because they do not consider in any detail the effects of female child-rearing and the class-gender division. Instead the authors see the position of women in the trade unions as the result of the attitudes of both men and women, and argue that women's position in the labour-force can be easily altered through legislative reform to the labour laws and through attitudinal changes. This superficial argument results

as they see the structure of the work-force as separate from the rest of society, and argue that it can be changed while leaving the structure of the family, and in particular female child-rearing, intact.

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